Parent Involvement in the Mercer Island School District

Mercer Island High School
Mercer Island, Washington

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School and Community Information

- 1450 students grades 9-12
- Affluent, suburban, and an island community
- The MIHS faculty and curriculum
- Achievement results
Why is parent involvement important?

- Develops community and strong relationships
- Shared interest and responsibility
- Helps us understand our students better
- Helps parents understand our work and our challenges
- We need their help and they need our help
Research on Parent Involvement

- Definitions of parent involvement
- Growing body of research since the 1980’s
- Research overwhelmingly demonstrates that students with involved parents have:
  - higher grades and test scores
  - higher attendance and graduation rates
  - better social skills
  - higher rates of college admission
Examples of Formal Parent Involvement

- School Board
- District Committees
- PTSA
- District PTSA
Examples of Formal Parent Involvement

- Fine Arts Advisory
- Booster Clubs
- Site Council
- Mutual Respect and Understandings
Examples of Informal Parent Involvement

- Homework, teacher meetings, school events, communicating with teachers etc.
- Exercising opportunities to provide the parent perspective
- Activity and specialty event planning
- Interview teams
Examples of Informal Parent Involvement

- Ad hoc committees (school and district)
- Focus groups
- Volunteer opportunities
- Sharing expertise
Revenue Generation

- Mercer Island Schools Foundation
- Bond and levy Committees
- Legislative committees
- Individuals and corporations
- PTSA
- Booster Clubs
Summary Points

- **Mutual Understandings** document
- Role of Board, District Administration, School Administrators
- Attitude
- Partnership

The most promising opportunity for student achievement occurs when families, schools, and community organizations work together.
Questions and Challenges

• A valuable resource or a threat to autonomy and professionalism?
• Less affluent communities?
• How is this approach sustained?

• Decision Making
• Dependence
• Training/Educating
• Expectations
• Competing Interests
• Equity and Access